

# Weird Laws

## Law & Order

**Kickoff:**                    **Have you ever heard of any really weird laws?  
Share them with your classmates!**

**Reading & Speaking:**   **Read the laws and follow the instructions.**

You are going to read about twelve laws from around the world. Some of them are real, but others are made up (not real). As you read, talk about each of the laws with your teacher or classmates and decide which you think are real and which you think are made up.

Singapore: To maintain cleanliness and combat crime (vandalism), Singapore's law prohibits the sale of chewing gum, except for medicinal use. Those who flout this law can be fined up to \$1,000.

UK: It is illegal to die within the walls of the UK Parliament. To comply with this law, you must leave the Parliament building before dying or else you will be committing a crime.

Madrid, Spain: Asking the time between 3:29 p.m. and 6:47 p.m. in Madrid is prohibited. If you wish not to violate this law and be driven to crime, check your own watch or any public clocks instead.

France: Owning a cat and a dog simultaneously in France is illegal. In order to fight crime, French police must ensure that all French residents adhere to the law and keep only one of the two animals.

Iceland: A 17th-century Icelandic decree permits the killing of Basque people in the Westfjords region. This means that to murder is not to perpetrate a crime, as long as the victim is Basque.

UK: British common law authorises pregnant women to urinate anywhere they like, even in a police officer's helmet. This petty crime does not apply to them and they are, in this sense, above the law.

Catalonia, Spain: In Catalonia, sex workers must comply with the law and wear high-visibility safety vests to ensure safety on the job. Those who don't abide by the law face minor penalties.

Italy: Singing in public while wearing a hat is outlawed in Italy, in order to maintain an orderly atmosphere. A violation of this law is seen as a lesser crime.

London, UK: Tasteless Christmas decorations are banned in London, and so is keeping them up after the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January. To break this law is to carry out a minor, yet punishable, crime.

France: Fear of extraterrestrial activity led to a law in Châteauneuf-du-Pape that bans UFOs from flying over the town. To break this law would be an alien offence!

Denmark: Danish law mandates parents to choose from an approved list of names for their baby. To do otherwise is against the law and requires special permission.

Oklahoma, USA: Oklahoma's law strictly outlaws bear wrestling to tackle the crime of animal cruelty. To stay within the law and avoid harm, do not engage in bear wrestling in Oklahoma!

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## Odd One Out (Collocations): Find the odd one out in each of the rows:

In language, collocations are words which commonly go together (like "take a walk"). In the previous exercise, you read lots of collocations with the words "law" and "crime".

In the table below, there are four words in each row before the words "law" or "crime". Three of the four words are correct collocations, but one of the words is not. Can you identify which of the four words is not a correct collocation?

	A	B	C	D	
1	adhere to	comply with	carry out	abide by	the law
2	break	violate	flout	smash	the law
3	over	above	against	within	the law
4	combat	attack	fight	tackle	crime
5	do	perpetrate	commit	carry out	a crime
6	lesser	lower	minor	petty	crime

\*If you find it difficult, check the texts on the previous page.

## Speaking II: Create Your Own Weird Law

Split into pairs or small groups.

In your pair or small group, you have to create a fictional law. You can choose where your law would be enforced, but make sure not to be offensive and to avoid stereotypes!

Be creative and have fun making your law. Remember to use the collocations you have learnt!

When you have created it, if you have time, make up the backstory for your law. Why does it exist? What problem does it aim to solve?

When you have finished, share your laws with the rest of the class. You can vote for the funniest law.